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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 ANKARA 002691

SIPDIS

STATE FOR EUR/RPM, EUR/SE, PM

E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/12/2014

TAGS: [MOPS](#) [PREL](#) [TU](#) [AF](#)

SUBJECT: ISAF SHORTFALLS: TURKS CONTEND THEY HAVE THE
POLITICAL WILL, BUT LACK THE RESOURCES

REF: A) USNATO 457 B) ANKARA 2475 C) ANKARA 1881 D)
STATE 068430

(U) Classified by Ambassador Eric S. Edelman. Reasons: 1.5
(B and D).

11. (C) During a recent discussion on Turkish helos for Afghanistan (ref b), NATO Department Head Alper Coskun confirmed what MFA officials had told us in late March (ref c): the Turkish military does not possess Role 2 and Casualty Staging Medical Unit capability. Coskun said the Turkish General Staff (TGS) also had informed the MFA that it did not possess the dedicated aircraft requested by COMISAF. TGS reportedly instructed the Turkish MNR at SHAPE to inform Allies accordingly.

12. (C) TGS Deputy J5 for Strategy MG Arslan (who accompanied TGS CHOD GEN Ozkok to Brussels for the May 5-6 NATO CHOD meetings) told pol-mil counselor May 11 that the NATO CHODs correctly identified political will and resources as the keys to filling ISAF shortfalls. For Turkey, Arslan argued there is no question of political will; it is a matter of resources. He noted that while Turkey may have seven brigades that are capable of being deployed, deployments require resources, and the Turkish military did not have the requisite resources.

COMMENT

13. (C) Arslan's statement that Turkey possesses the political will to help NATO meet ISAF shortfalls tracks with what we have heard from other TGS and MFA officials. Arslan is correct that in the case of Turkey, one of the keys to securing Turkish contributions to coalition operations is money, as we have seen in the case of the three helos for ISAF. MFA officials tell us that TGS is not prepared to fund contributions to ISAF or other operations in Afghanistan out of its existing budget, and that TGS will continue to request funding from the PM before making commitments. It is conceivable that the Turkish military may not have within its normal budget sufficient resources to finance contributions to operations such as ISAF, and that any contributions financed by the military may come at the expense of other operations or modernization programs. That said, the Turkish military has access to other funds (in addition to any funding the PM may provide) that furthers its modernization program and increases its ability to contribute to operations such as ISAF: Foreign Military Financing (FMF). During our recent discussions with PM and MFA officials, we noted that the USG recently apportioned \$35M in FMF for Turkey for FY04, and that this funding could be used to facilitate Turkish contributions to ISAF.

14. (C) Regarding the areas that NATO SYG is looking to Turkey to provide for ISAF (ref a), we doubt that the Turkish military will reverse its long-standing position and provide infantry companies for Stage One. We suspect TGS may be open to contributing a limited number of infantry to support the vote registration and election process. TGS already has stated that it does not have a Role 2 medical facility capability. On the three previously committed helicopters, MFA officials told us following CHOD Ozkok's statement during the May 5-6 meeting that the three helos would be in Afghanistan by the end of the month that, while PM Erdogan had not formally authorized the \$1.5M requested by TGS, the MFA did not believe Ozkok would have made such a statement in Brussels if he was not confident the Turkish military could deliver the helicopters as promised.

15. (C) Ambassador telephoned MFA U/S Ziyal to follow up on the President's telephone call to PM Erdogan, and the DCM did

the same with PM Foreign Policy Advisor Ambassador Arat (ref b). Ziyal (after consulting with TGS D/CHOD GEN Basbug) said there were two main issues associated with the President's request: one, the Turkish military had lost a number of helos during the past year and did not have many helos left in its inventory; and two, funding.

16. (C) If Washington decides to approach the GOT at the senior levels to reinforce the NATO SYG's efforts, we suggest that it remind GOT officials of the availability of the FMF funding to help Turkey contribute to coalition operations, assuming the USG is prepared to allow Turkey to use FMF funding for such purposes.

EDELMAN